UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/764,066	01/23/2004	Balaji S. Thenthiruperai	2582	7596

28005 7590 06/12/2008

SPRINT
6391 SPRINT PARKWAY
KSOPHT0101-Z2100
OVERLAND PARK, KS 66251-2100

EXAMINER	
GAUTHIER, GERALD	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2614	

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
06/12/2008	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/764,066	THENTHIRUPERAI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Gerald Gauthier	2614	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *25 March 2008*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-33* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-33* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham* **v.** *John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

3. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

4. **Claims 1-33** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ju et al. (US 7,146,320 B2) in view of Atkin et al. (US 2007/0276667 A1).

Regarding **claim 1**, Ju discloses a method of rendering content of an email as speech [column 1, lines 6-8], comprising the steps of:

inserting a tag into the email, wherein said tag separates a first content in said email provided by a first source from a second content in said email provided by a second source [the tags "<Questions>" "<Answers>" denote the corresponding question portion and answer portion of the e-mail message, the questions are from first source and the answers are from a second source, column 5, lines 55-63];

transmitting said email to a system for rendering said email as speech [the text portion of the e-mail message is interpreted by the text-to-speech converter 24 to generate an audio signal that is sent through the phone network to the phone 22, column 6, lines 12-26],

detecting said tag [If, however, indicators are present in the e-mail message indicating that the e-mail message is of the form of a question and proposed answers, in addition to converting the portions to speech at step 162, a language model indicative of the proposed answers is provided to the speech recognition module 26 at step 164, column 6, lines 27-54].

Ju fails to disclose wherein said system supports two or more different voice modes.

However, Atkin teaches wherein said system supports two or more different voice modes [the voice reader converts the text block to speech using a low pitch male voice at medium volume and slow pace, paragraph 0047].

wherein when said email is rendered as speech, said first content is rendered in a first voice mode and wherein said second content is rendered in a second voice mode, with the second voice mode being different from the first voice mode [the voice reader converts the text block to speech using a low pitch male voice at medium volume and slow pace and the voice reader converts the text block to speech using a medium pitch female voice at medium volume and medium pace, paragraphs 0048 and 0049].

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of the ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Ju using the different voice modes as taught by Atkin.

This modification of the invention enables the system to have said system supports two or more different voice modes so that the user would have a synthesized voice signal with properties that correspond to the voice attributes.

Regarding **claims 2, 6, 20 and 33**, Ju discloses a method, wherein said first content comprises an original email message and wherein said second content comprises a reply email message to said original email message [column 6, lines 12-26].

Regarding **claims 3, 7, 21, 25 and 32**, Ju discloses a method, wherein said step of inserting a tag into the email is performed by an email client application [column 6, lines 27-54].

Regarding **claims 4, 8, 22, 26 and 31**, Ju discloses a method, wherein said step of inserting a tag into the email is performed by an email server [column 6, lines 27-54].

Regarding **claim 5**, Ju in combination with Atkin disclose all the limitations of claim 5 as stated in claim 1's rejection above.

Regarding **claims 9, 23, 27 and 30**, Ju discloses a method, wherein said reply message comprises a voice memo in response to a specific portion of said original email message, and wherein the method further comprises the step of processing said email message to detect a tag associated with said voice memo, and responsively rendering said voice memo as speech [column 6, lines 27-54].

Regarding **claims 10, 24, 28 and 29**, Ju discloses a method, wherein said tag comprises a pointer to an object comprising said voice memo [column 6, lines 27-54].

Regarding **claims 11 and 14-16**, Ju in combination with Atkin disclose all the limitations of claims 11, 14-16 as stated in claim 1's rejection above. I

It is well known that signature block is not converted into speech.

Regarding **claims 12 and 13**, Ju in combination with Atkin disclose all the limitations of claims 12 and 13 as stated in claim 1's rejection above.

It is well known that private or confidentiality notice is not converted into speech.

Regarding **claims 17-19**, Ju in combination with Atkin disclose all the limitations of claims 17-19 as stated in claim 1's rejection above.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to **claims 1-33** have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Meyer et al. is cited for generating responses from wireless devices.

Dodrill et al. is cited for management of messages using standardized servers.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gerald Gauthier whose telephone number is (571) 272-7539. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Fan Tsang can be reached on (571) 272-7547. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Gerald Gauthier/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2614

/GG/
June 12, 2008